

Best Friends Meet Again at Cooke

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq—Imagine reuniting with a best friend you haven't spoken to in 10 years. Now imagine that reunion over the breakfast table in Iraq.

"I was at breakfast one morning. I saw this guy across the room and thought 'I think I know him'," said Master Sgt. David Avington, Headquarters Company motor sergeant, 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. "I went over to talk to him and sure enough it was George."

They met in 1981 when they were stationed together with the 58th Engineer Company in Fulda, Germany.

"We were roommates and the only two black Soldiers in the company for about a year or so," said Master Sgt. Davidson George, maintenance officer, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div. "We played sports and went volksmarching. We did a lot of things together."

While George has been active Army for the past 25 years, Avington is in his 21st year with the Arkansas National Guard, which he joined after completing a four-year tour. Even though their career paths took them in two different directions, they still share the same job and rank.

"Over the years, we have phoned each other or wrote," said George, who currently calls Uniondale,



Photos by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

His inspection complete, Master Sgt. David Avington, Headquarters Company motor sergeant, 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, explains to Staff Sgt. Jeff Bergan, assistant battle NCO, 39th BCT S-3, items on his vehicle that will need to be replaced or repaired.

N.Y. home. "While I lived in Wisconsin, I had the opportunity to drive through Arkansas and tried to visit with [Avington] then. Through job constraints and timing we weren't able to visit, but have kept in touch in small spurts over the years. Even though we have not had many opportunities to get together over the years, we have still managed to stay good friends."

The scene of just missing each other has played

itself out several times over their 20-year friendship. One particular instance was during mobilization and training for their deployment to Iraq.

"[Avington] was at Fort Hood for four months and I didn't even know it," said

Master Sgt. Davidson George, maintenance officer, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, works on the brigade's "equipment deadline" report.

George.

Working in the same field in different brigades, the two motor sergeants continually help each other out with work related issues.

"Since we are in the maintenance arena, we share stuff," George said. "Directions, part numbers, what have you. We try to make our jobs easier by helping each other out."

As if sharing jobs, rank and a long-standing friendship were not enough, George, a drag racer on the side, is turning Avington onto the sport.

"[George] is introducing me to drag racing," said Avington, a native of Arkadelphia, Ark.. "Who can tell, I might get into it."

Though their separate career paths have taken them individually to different parts of the world, the two old friends are here in Iraq spending as much time as they can together.

"It is always good to see a friendly face. We were roommates for 18 months. When you have a friendship like ours, it just doesn't go away," Avington said.



CG Tells Iraqi TV:**Insurgents Won't Stop Progress**

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

CAMP AL-TAHREER, Iraq - Insurgent activity won't halt work being done to rebuild Baghdad's infrastructure, according to the commander of American forces in Baghdad.

In an interview with Iraqi satellite station Al Sharqiya Sept. 21, Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, discussed

recent acts of violence in Baghdad and the efforts the Multi-National Forces are making to improve the security situation while ongoing civil military projects are rebuilding the city's critical infrastructure systems.

"If I can have peace ... today, I have enough money to do all the major work in Baghdad," Chiarelli said. "We can do so much ... to turn around the deplorable conditions there are in many portions of the city."

Recent violence in Al Thawra, Haifa Street, and in other areas of Baghdad has caused some concern about whether the 1st Cav. Div. can continue to focus on providing assistance for civil military projects, Al Sharqiya reporter Amar Al-Joburi said.

There were more than 15,000 people in Al Thawra employed on reconstruction projects in early August. Some of those projects were shut down for two weeks when violence broke out between Iraqi insurgents and Multi-National Forces last month.

As the security situation improves, projects to improve the city's infrastructure, including water, sewer, trash and electricity services, can continue unhindered, Chiarelli said. This week a project for a new sewer system in the southern area of Al Thawra will kick-off, employing 1,000 local Iraqis. The 1st Cav. Div. commanding general believes projects like this will help improve the security situation in Baghdad.

"I think the key to improving the security situ-

ation in Baghdad is giving people hope through the execution of our large projects to fix the infrastructure," he said.

While improvements are being made to Baghdad's infrastructure, Iraqi security forces are working alongside 1st Cav. Div. Soldiers to ensure stability is maintained in dangerous areas of the city like Al Thawra. Chiarelli said he believes that the Iraqi security forces are continually improving and getting stronger, but he stressed that the residents of Baghdad could play a part in improving the security situation.

"Every tip they give us. Every time they identify for us an [improvised explosive device], a mortar or a [vehicle-borne improvised explosive device], or a vehicle that they suspect; they make the security in Baghdad just a little bit better," Chiarelli said.

The general added that a prosperous future can be attained in Baghdad if cooperation exists between the Iraqi security forces, Multi-National Forces and the Iraqi people.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli (left), 1st Cavalry Division commanding general, prepares for an interview with Amar Al-Joburi, of Iraqi satellite station Al Sharqiya, while interpreter Nick Cosma looks on at Camp Al-Tahreer Sept. 21

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**I'm leaving now.
ana mughaadir al-aan**

Thursday

High: 104
Low: 74

**Friday**

High: 102
Low: 74

**Saturday**

High: 104
Low: 74



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli

Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. James Hutton

122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Cmdr.: Maj. John Fuhrman

Public Affairs Supervisor: Master Sgt. Dave Larsen

1st Sgt. 122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment: 1st Sgt. William Kuhns

Editor: Spc. Andy Miller

Staff Writers: Sgt. 1st Class Tony Sailer, Staff Sgt. Susan German, Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, Sgt. Dan Purcell, Sgt. Christina Rockhill, Cpl. Benjamin

Cossel, Cpl. Bill Putnam, Spc. Jan Critchfield, Spc. Marie Whitney, Spc. Erik LeDrew, Pfc. Al Barrus, Pfc. Brian Schroeder, Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin.

The Daily Charge is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of **The Daily Charge** are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 1st Cavalry Division. All editorial content of **The Daily Charge** is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs Office.

News Notes

Space Tourism Sells in Dallas

DALLAS (*Dallas Morning News*) - A "vomit comet" made a mercifully brief stop in Dallas on Tuesday. Zero Gravity Corp., a Florida-based space tourism company, took a Boeing 727 jet on two roller-coaster flights out of Dallas Love Field. Up and down the plane zoomed, creating short periods of weightlessness for its cargo of journalists, business executives and space fans. Starting next month, the company will regularly fly ordinary people into zero gravity. The idea is to bring the excitement of space flight to everyone. "This is a huge part of the astronaut experience," said Col. Rick Searfoss, who flew three space shuttle missions.

Texas Lightbulb Burns for 96 Years

DALLAS (*Reuters*) - They sure do not make things anymore like the Texas lightbulb that sold for a few cents and has burned for 96 straight years. The North Fort Worth Historical Society will have a birthday party on Tuesday for its famous household fixture -- a lightbulb that has burned continuously since Sept. 21, 1908. The bulb was first illuminated when a stagehand at a local opera house flicked a switch and posted a sign that the light over a stage entrance was not be turned off. "We have no idea why it has lasted so long. That is the wonderful mystery of it," said Sarah Biles, the administrator of the museum where the bulb burns.



Austin American-Statesman

Cesar Sanchez demonstrates his show roping abilities Saturday in front of the capital building after the Mexican Independence Day parade in Austin.

Corps Lakes Bring Revenue

BELTON, Texas (*Killen Daily Herald*) - Lake visitation has stabilized but revenue is climbing at both Army Corps of Engineers lakes in Bell County.

Between 2002 and 2004, Belton Lake had 2.5 million visitors annually, and Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir has had 700,000, said Dan Thomasson, Army Corps of Engineers lake manager, at the Corps' annual lake update Tuesday at the Belton Lake headquarters.

The Corps collected \$500,000 in user fees at Belton Lake and \$200,000 at Stillhouse Hollow. "We are rapidly approaching campground (use) capacity, though the day use decreased slightly, probably because (Fort Hood) troops are deployed," Thomasson said.

Both Lakes Belton and Stillhouse Hollow were built primarily for flood control, Thomasson said. A benefit of

flood control is providing a drinking water supply and recreation.

The Corps also spelled out law enforcement, water safety statistics, and updated construction projects and other new programs.

Belton dam prevented \$767,100 in flood damage in 2003, for a total prevention of \$149 million in flood damage since its construction.

"That's pretty good on a \$13 million investment," Thomasson said. Stillhouse Hollow dam prevented \$250,000 in damage in 2003, he said.

Updates were given on construction projects. About \$400,000 in new facilities at Live Oak Ridge Park Lake Belton dam are completed. The new bridge to Gatesville over the north end of Belton Lake on Texas Highway 36 is proceeding on schedule.

White Flint Park closed in May to improve the road, pro-

vide new restrooms and add 13 recreational vehicle camp sites and screened shelters. Westcliff Park was also upgraded.

The upgraded campground reservation system has expanded sales channels, ranger Robert Waznik said, and payment may also be made by credit card. In 2005, the campground reservation system will also handle all National Parks, National Forests, and Bureau of Land Reclamation sites, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers campgrounds.

Thomasson concluded by noting the importance of working with area agencies.

"The chambers of commerce promote both lakes," he said, which increases spending by \$41 million within a 30-mile radius of the lakes and supports 1,141 jobs. The Corps also seeks to mesh its trails system with area plans for county-wide hiking trails.

Rangers Still in Contention

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) - Michael Young didn't let Mark Mulder get out of another bases-loaded jam, and made sure the Texas Rangers kept alive their long-shot chance in the AL West.

Young's grand slam in the fourth, an inning after Mulder escaped trouble, helped the Rangers to a 9-4 win Tuesday night in the opener of a three-game series against the division-leading Oakland Athletics.

"If Mulder gets out of that inning, who knows what happens," Mark Teixeira said. "The grand slam really hurts. After that, as a team we knew it was over."

The Athletics trailed just 3-2 before Young's second career slam, his 21st homer this season. It came



AP

Texas Rangers pitcher Ryan Drese delivers a pitch to the Oakland Athletics in the first inning, Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2004, in Arlington, Texas.

after first baseman Scott Hatteberg's two-out error and put the Rangers up 7-2.

"That's the type of thing a player like Mike does for a club," manager Buck Showalter said. "That's what leadership is all about."

Young was an All-Star shortstop this season after switching from second base in spring training. He replaced Alex Rodriguez after the AL MVP was traded to the New York Yankees.

Texas is four games behind the Athletics with 12 to play. Anaheim, which lost 7-3 to Seattle, is 2½ back of Oakland.

While the September struggles of Mulder continued, Ryan Drese (14-8) won his third straight start even though he allowed four runs in 5 2-3 innings.

Mulder (17-6) didn't make it out of the fifth, allowing nine runs - five earned - eight hits, two walks and two hit batters. The left-hander is 0-2 with an 8.22 ERA in four starts this month.

Tiger's Pullout Quiets Lumbar Buzz

FARMINGTON, Pa. (AP) - The traffic on the two-lane roads leading to the Nemaquin Woodlands Resort figures to be much lighter now, the galleries smaller. There's no more hype about No. 1 vs. No. 2, or the 84 Lumber Classic becoming the PGA's fall classic.

What Tiger Woods brings to a tournament he can take away, and Woods' pullout Tuesday eliminated much of the buzz surrounding what was promising to be one of the PGA Tour's best post-major tournaments.

Now, No. 1-ranked Vijay Singh can reprise his Canadian Open dual against Mike Weir, but there's no danger of No. 2 Woods unseating him to reclaim the world ranking he held for about five years. Instead of 21 of the

top 30 money winners - an excellent fall field - there are only 19.

The field is significantly upgraded from a year ago, when only one of the top 21 money winners showed up at the resort where the tournament is held. But defending champion J.L. Lewis said any tournament with Woods playing has a more important feel to it.

"Ernie Els, too, anybody who's in the top 20 or 30 in world," Lewis said Tuesday. "It's always good to have Tiger in the field."

Tournament officials, most notably 84 Lumber founder Joe Hardy, were disappointed by the news, especially after they spent considerable money promoting Woods' appearance.

Woods cited fatigue following the United States' unexpectedly poor



Getty Images

Tiger Woods pulled out of the 84 Lumber Classic citing fatigue.

showing in its 18½-9½ loss to Europe last weekend in the Ryder Cup in suburban Detroit. Woods won only two of five matches, and his twin losses Friday with Dream Team partner Phil Mickelson was the precursor of the Europeans' rout.

In Brief

Winfrey Visits Military Wives

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (AP) - Earlier this year, it was the 20,000 troops of the 101st Airborne Division who were welcomed here. On Monday, it was Oprah Winfrey, who came to congratulate the Soldiers' wives expecting babies between September and December - all 640 of them. Each became pregnant after their husband returned from Iraq. "This is incredible. This is the biggest blessing. It's unbelievable," said Holly Munster, a military spouse. Oprah gave gifts to the women. Supermodel Cindy Crawford along with country singers Martina McBride and Kenny Chesney also attended the taping of the show, which will air Tuesday.

Cowboy's Jones Out for 2 Months

IRVING, Texas (AP) - The first NFL game for Dallas Cowboys rookie running back Julius Jones will also be his last for quite a while. Jones



broke his left shoulder blade during a 19-12 victory over Cleveland on Sunday. He won't need surgery, but he's expected to miss about two months ended the day where they started: a half-game behind the idle Giants. "We've been knocking on first place for a while," Chicago manager Dusty Baker said. Jones was the Cowboy's top pick in the 2004 draft.